



I-29/I-35 EIS & Location Study

MoDOT is developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate and recommend improvements to the I-29/I-35 corridor from just north of the Missouri 210/Armour Road interchange, over the Missouri River, and south to the northwest corner of the downtown Kansas City, Missouri Central Business District (CBD) loop, including the north side of the CBD loop.

I-29/I-35 EIS Update

The study team is working to complete the Draft EIS document. An important part of that work is incorporating and responding to feedback, comments and concerns raised over the course of the study. The team anticipates that the Draft EIS will be ready later this year. At that time, the Draft EIS document will be available for public review and there will be an official 45-day comment period. During the comment period, MoDOT will host an open-house public hearing on the alternatives and recommendations outlined in the Draft document. Those comments will then be documented and incorporated and responded to as appropriate in the Final EIS. Approval of the Final EIS and receipt of the Record of Decision (ROD) will allow MoDOT to move into the design phase of the project.

[You will receive a notice about Draft EIS viewing locations and information on how to make a formal comment.](#)

What the EIS **will** do...

One of the main purposes of the EIS process is to assess likely project impacts to both the natural and man-made environment. Another important part of the EIS process is to also ensure that the project avoids negative environmental impacts wherever possible and feasible.

As a part of that assessment, the Draft EIS will identify a **Preferred Alternative**. The process of developing that recommendation started over a year ago, with a wide range of **Concepts**. In the fall of 2004, those Concepts were screened to identify **Reasonable Alternatives**. Work since then has focused on refining those Reasonable Alternatives based on community and stakeholder input, additional environmental information and additional engineering work. That effort will result in the identification of the **Preferred Alternative** in the Draft EIS and ultimately, a **Selected Alternative**.

The Draft EIS Preferred Alternative will show where the highway and river crossing will likely be located, how many lanes will be constructed and how the highway will generally operate. It will also discuss possible construction phasing and ultimate, long-term improvements.

[A Selected Alternative will not be identified by MoDOT until after the public, as well as local, state and federal agencies have the opportunity to review the EIS document and make comments.](#)

News on I-29/I-35
Environmental Impact
Statement
from the Missouri
Department of
Transportation

Fall 2005

(over, please)

What the EIS **won't** do

The I-29/I-35 EIS won't tell us what a new Missouri River crossing might look like. It will not provide detailed design information. Detailed design work will follow the EIS process and the identification of a Selected Alternative.

Addressing Outstanding Issues

Clearly, this is an important project for the community and the nation. A wide range of stakeholders are already weighing in on specific interchange and bridge designs, transit and high-occupancy vehicle accommodation, pedestrian and bicycle access, environmental impacts as well as other issues.

While the lack of design specifics at this stage in the process is understandably trying to stakeholders and the community, the majority of those issues cannot be answered in detail until a Selected Alternative is named through the federally mandated EIS process. It is important to note that MoDOT expects that the Selected Alternative will, in virtually every instance, be refined through the design process and that continued community input will be a meaningful part of that process.

[Additionally, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission is expected to approve this project for one of three pilot design-build projects in the state.](#) Because design-build allows the project to move forward more quickly by overlapping design and construction phases, it is critical that the Draft EIS, and in time, the Final EIS, both have flexibility to allow maximum creativity and efficiency to make the most of this unique opportunity while addressing community needs, minimizing negative environmental impacts and making the most of the funding allocated to the project.

Congress has allocated an additional \$50 million for this project, beyond the project funding already identified by MoDOT. How will that additional money be spent?

MoDOT is committed to continue working with the community and stakeholders through the design process to make that determination. MoDOT and the design team will engage the community and work with stakeholders to determine community priorities for enhancements to the crossing and the project as a whole.

How will MoDOT decide what the bridge will look like?

That decision will be a combination of engineering factors as well as input from stakeholders and the community at large. The crossing will be required to have a specific span (space between piers) and clearance over the river to allow safe navigation on the Missouri River. Those requirements will determine a range of practical bridge types. The design team will be charged with working with the community to design and construct a Missouri River crossing that reflects the community and its priorities.

What about bike and pedestrian access?

The EIS will discuss the need for a protected bike and pedestrian crossing over the Missouri River. MoDOT has asked the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible for area-wide transportation planning, to take the lead in convening community stakeholders to assess where protected bike/ped crossings over major rivers are appropriate throughout the region. Earlier plans show a planned protected crossing of the Missouri River on the Heart of America Bridge, although there is public interest in putting bicycle and pedestrian access on the new I-29 river crossing. Along with the safety of all travelers, a key issue in establishing a crossing is the presence of, or commitment for, appropriate connectivity to and from nearby trails, as well as local street systems.

We appreciate your interest in the I-29/I-35 EIS and Location Study. You will receive a notice when the Draft EIS is available for official public review and comment as well as information about the public hearing.